



Weekly Special Report



Produced by the Public Affairs Section

INSIDE

U.S. Government Provides Funds to Assist Efforts in Prevention of Trafficking of Women and Children

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Addis Ababa (U.S. Embassy) -- The United States Government through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) has provided funding of US \$412,485

(3,567,995 Birr) to the International Organization on Migration (IOM) to expand its efforts to prevent trafficking of women and children. IOM has partnered with Ethiopian or-



Ambassador Brazeal (rear) with IOM and GSA officials (center) and the graduates

ganizations including the Good Samaritan Association which provided training for 11 trafficked victims and granted certificates for their skills training in leather work, photography and driving in a graduation ceremony on June 21.

Of these 11 trafficked victims, one is a male, 10 are female, and all came back to Ethiopia from Lebanon. Although the problem of

trafficking needs to be addressed at the root causes, providing economic opportunities for citizens vulnerable to trafficking is essential so

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The United States Government Donates Medical Equipment for Rural Health Facilities

Addis Ababa (U.S. Embassy) -- The U.S. Embassy, coordinating with the Federal Ministry of Health, announces the purchase and handing over of 6.4 million birr worth of medical equipment purchased via USAID/Ethiopia for 100

rural health facilities to improve reproductive health and family planning in the following regions:

- Tigray will receive 1 million birr worth of equipment
- Amhara will receive 1.4

million birr

- Oromia Region receives 2.1 million birr

- SNNP Region receives 1.4 million birr

- Benishangul-Gumuz

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that they do not have to accept dubious employment outside the country or turn to other high risk activities to earn their living.

United States Ambassador Aurelia Brazeal remarked at the graduation ceremony, "Although it is important to attack the root causes of human trafficking, it is equally important to recognize and address its human consequences at an individual level. I am sure that these graduates will be able to use the skills that they have acquired to build a new life - "Addis Hiwot".



Ambassador Brazeal giving remarks

The Addis Hiwot Center for Trafficked Women, managed by the Good Samaritan Association, is the first of its kind in Ethiopia, and

opened its doors one year ago. The Center has been providing shelter for women and men who have returned to Ethiopia after undergoing psychological, physical, social and sexual abuse while working outside of this country.

According to United States Government estimates, 800,000 to 900,000 victims are trafficked globally each year. Women and children comprise the largest group of victims. The low status and vulnerability of women, combined with poverty and the expanding global markets for sex and cheap labor are at the root of trafficking. ♦

Ethiopian Women Candidates Overcome Obstacles to Enter Politics

ADDIS ABABA—When Ethiopians voted in general elections May 15, more than 100 of the candidates contesting seats were women, many of them trained with U.S. assistance.

USAID provided \$300,000 to Women's Campaign International (WCI) to support Ethiopian women entering politics. The candidates received training in developing a campaign plan, public speaking, building confidence, use of media, and understanding laws and government procedures. U.S. funds also helped one women's group promote women candidates through radio, TV, and billboards.

Postelection training will be offered to the newly elected women to help them understand parliamentary operations. The perception of women as house-bound mothers and the lack of support for women's political groups hinder women from participating in politics in Ethiopia.

But things are slowly changing. In the latest election, the Ethiopian government committed 30 percent of parliamentary seats for women. In the early 1990s, a Women's Affairs Office was established in the Office of the Prime Minister to provide support for women. And in 1995, the Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia was written to guarantee gender equality.

U.S. Ambassador Aurelia Brazeal said of the U.S. government's role in Ethiopia's elections: "The United States wants to see Ethiopia prosper as a democracy, and we feel passionate about the importance of free, fair, and accountable elections. It is critically important that voters [and candidates] have the information and understanding they need to participate in the election."

In March 2005, WCI hosted a one-day conference where 175 men and women discussed strategies to overcome challenges women

candidates face and increase their participation in the upcoming elections. The participants drafted and signed a five-point declaration to support women's political participation in Ethiopia.

In April, WCI returned to Ethiopia to offer two pre-election candidate training sessions for 60 women. WCI also provided a \$20,000 subgrant for a media campaign through the Ethiopian Women's Media Association to highlight women candidates and the importance of voting for them.

The May 15 general elections were reported to be relatively peaceful and calm, with more than 90 percent of registered voters participating. Press reports indicate a stronger than expected showing for the opposition parties. Official election results will be announced June 8.

(Taken from Front Lines (June 2005) a USAID publication. Sandra Kalscheur and Dianne Zemichael contributed to this article.) ♦

The United States Government Donates Medical Equipment . . .

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receives 529 thousand birr

The rapid population growth in Ethiopia is a serious challenge to the development efforts of the nation. Ethiopia has one of the highest rates of population growth in the world, estimated at 2.7% per annum in 2003 and a total fertility rate of 5.9 children per woman (National Office of Population, 2003). If the current rate of growth remains unchanged, Ethiopia's population of 74 million will double in less than 25 years. Compounding the rapid population growth are HIV/AIDS and the cycles of drought. In view of these

challenges, the Government of Ethiopia has made a strong national family planning program an integral part of its social and economic development objectives.

USAID is closely supporting the work of the Federal and Regional Health authorities to expand access to and improve the quality of reproductive health services throughout Ethiopia and to meet the reproductive health needs of Ethiopian families.

USAID has funded Pathfinder International to assist the Ministry of Health in expanding family planning services through an integrated

community outreach program that is linked to the health facility through a cadre of volunteers called Community Based Reproductive Health Agents (CBRH). The CBRH Agents go door-to-door advising and counseling women on the reproductive health options available to them in their near-by health facility.

The equipment donated to the Ministry of Health on June 20 helps in meeting the reproductive health needs of Ethiopia. One hundred rural health facilities in the regions noted above will benefit from this medical equipment. ♦

Africa Panel Finds Ethiopia's Elections Extraordinarily Open

By Jim Fisher-Thompson
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington – A panel of African experts meeting June 15 displayed striking unanimity in its assessment of Ethiopia's recent parliamentary elections as having been extraordinarily open and free of violence. However, panel members expressed concern over the charges of tampering and condemned the post-election violence.

The way forward, they agreed, must include greater restraint by the government of Prime Minister Meles Zenawi and opposition leaders to prevent another outbreak of the kind of disturbances that led to numerous deaths.

Jane Gaffney, State Department director for East Africa, told a meeting on "Ethiopia's Elections and the Aftermath," sponsored by the Center for Strategic and Inter-

national Studies (CSIS) and Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, that the May 15 national elections were "very impressive," in part, because of the absence of violence; an all too common occurrence in some emerging nations.



Turnout was 90% in Ethiopia's elections

Joining her on the CSIS panel were: Professor Terrance Lyons, an Ethiopia expert with the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason Uni-

versity, Ethiopian Ambassador Kassahun Ayele, and Chris Albin-Lackey, an Africa program officer with Human Rights Watch.

Gaffney said the U.S. government viewed the election in Ethiopia "within the context of democratization around the world and particularly in Africa where we see a really close relationship between development/prosperity and democracy. You really can't have one without the other."

In the period leading up to the elections, Gaffney said, "We [the United States] were very involved in encouraging the ruling party, the government and the opposition for quite some time to turn these elections into something that was very, very meaningful." And that goal was "by and large" achieved in the voting process.

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United States, European Union Reiterate Commitment to Africa

The United States and the European Union (EU) issued a joint declaration and a fact sheet June 20 that reiterated their commitment to accelerated efforts "in support of democratic African nations, while acknowledging African ownership of present and future development on the continent."

The following were issued by the White House in connection with the U.S.-European Union Summit in Washington, where President Bush hosted Jean-Claude Juncker, president of the Council of the EU, and Jose Manuel Barroso, president of the European Commission:

The White House
Office of the Press
Secretary
June 20, 2005

EU-US DECLARATION ON WORKING TOGETHER TO PROMOTE PEACE, STABILITY, PROSPERITY, AND GOOD GOVERNANCE IN AFRICA

We remain committed to combining and accelerating our efforts in support of Africa and its leadership, while acknowledging its ownership of present and future African development.

We share the same belief that solidarity is an essential principle that should guide our action and that we, together with all other members of the international community, have an obligation to assist African efforts in the quest for

peace, stability, democracy and prosperity. We share the same objectives with poverty eradication as the primary aim of our relations with the developing world and we therefore undertake to increase our efforts to assist Sub Saharan Africa in its efforts to achieve sustainable economic growth and reach the internationally agreed goals contained in the Millennium Declarations.



President George W. Bush stands with European Union leaders Monday, June 20, 2005, in the Oval Office. From left are: Javier Solana, Foreign Policy Chief of the European Union; Jean-Claude Juncker, European Union President; President Bush, and EU Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso

We share the same hope built on the realisation that today there is an environment and leadership in much of Africa with a genuine commitment to better governance and a new resolve to take care of Africa's own conflicts.

We are working to support Africa's efforts to expand peace and security across the continent. In this context, we welcome that an increasing number of African nations are committing themselves to holding democratic elections, thereby paving the way for more

representative government. Improving respect for human rights and governance, consolidating democratic processes and reforming the security sector are central prerequisites for development. African nations are undertaking increased efforts to resolve conflicts and have achieved important progress in establishing their own security structures through the African Union and its Peace and Security

Council as well as at the sub-regional level.

Together we have been working to strengthen the African Union and other regional organisations that aim to improve stability in Africa and we are collaborating on the G8/African Union action plan to enhance capacity for peace support operations. We are committed to continue to assist African peace support operations as the EU has done through its African Peace Facility and contributions

from its Member States and the US through the Global Peacekeeping Operations Initiative by increased contributions to enhance the Peace Support Operations capacity and support for ongoing operations in Africa.

The African Union/NEPAD have provided Africa with an ambitious vision and strategy for the 21st century. We will work closely with the African Union as a key political interlocutor in our relations with Africa.

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United States, European Union Reiterate Commitment . . .

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The African Union and the sub-regional organisations have decisively assumed responsibility and leadership for resolving many of the armed conflicts that for so long have marred the continent. We are prepared to contribute to these efforts through:

Supporting broad and inclusive processes of implementing the comprehensive peace agreement in Sudan, capable of reconciling and accommodating the aspirations of all sectors of society and all regions of the country, while ensuring that the fight against impunity from violations of international humanitarian law and human rights law is sustained. To end the continuing violence and suffering of hundred of thousands in Darfur is an immediate priority. We reaffirm our strong support for the AU leadership in resolving the crisis and urge the parties to commit themselves wholeheartedly to resolve the conflict peacefully and engage constructively in the AU-sponsored negotiations in Abuja.

Reaffirming our continued support to the Somalia reconciliation process and assisting the Somali people and institutions, in their efforts to re-establish stability and governance. We are also committed to support efforts to resolve the border stalemate between Ethiopia and Eritrea. Both processes have much to contribute towards stability, development and security in the strategic region of the Horn of Africa.

Combining support for stability in the Great Lakes region, including through the disarmament of armed groups, Security Sector Reform in the Democratic Republic of Congo,

assistance in the organisation of the coming democratic elections in Burundi and the DRC and international observation thereof, and participation aimed at a successful outcome of the International Conference on the Great Lakes region. We have instructed the Joint Contact Group to continue to work together in order to address the problems in the region.

Continuing to support a regional approach to peace and security in West Africa, with a view to enhancing conflict management in ECOWAS and particularly by supporting United Nations and African efforts to consolidate transition processes in Côte d'Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Guinea-Bissau and encouraging national reconciliation in Togo.

Effective and well-governed states are critical to a peaceful and secure environment and protecting human rights; encouraging transparent and accountable public management and private sector growth delivering essential services and allowing resources to be used effectively. We will support the African Peer Review Mechanism as an important tool for peer learning and reforms it will trigger at the country level.

The U.S. and the EU note with deep concern the continuing governance and human rights crisis in Zimbabwe, which has led to a near breakdown of the economic situation of one of the most promising economies in Africa and caused huge flows of Zimbabweans to flee to neighbouring countries. We call upon the Government of Zimbabwe to reverse anti-democratic policies and to open a genuine dialogue with all stakeholders. We

also note that serious food shortages are looming in Zimbabwe, and we stand ready, as in the past, to assist the Zimbabwean people with food aid and other humanitarian assistance.

Life expectancy is increasing in every continent except Africa, where it has fallen for the last 20 years. HIV/AIDS, malaria and tuberculosis continue to affect too many people in Africa. We are committed to continue our support for the Global Fund for AIDS, TB and Malaria. We recognise the importance of education and gender equality for life expectancy and agree to intensify efforts in this regard.

We commit to work together to address both the immediate needs and the underlying causes of natural disasters and complex emergencies which plague the continent, including through collaboration on the assessment process, to ensure that needs are identified in an accurate and timely fashion, that assistance is appropriately targeted and arrives in time to save lives. Together, we commit to urgently increasing both our funding and engagement in these humanitarian emergencies.

To ensure a longer-term solution to the problem of famine and poverty in Africa, we will work with AU/NEPAD to support implementation of its Comprehensive African Agricultural Development Plan, which will help expand production and market opportunities, enhance agricultural productivity, and thus reduce the risk facing Africa's poorest farmers. We further commit to support AU/NEPAD's efforts to increase regional economic inte-

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United States, European Union Reiterate Commitment . . .

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gration in Africa as an important element of efforts to increase agricultural productivity, open our market to allow African exports to enter duty free until 2015 and, in this regard, will undertake efforts to promote accession of African countries to the WTO.

These commitments require resources. These should come from many sources, as set out at Monterrey, including increased foreign direct investment, trade, remittances, public aid and private charitable contributions. We recall the responsibility of developing countries for their own development through good governance, the rule of law, and sound policies, and the crucial importance of national ownership for development strategies. We stand ready to increase our financial assistance to Sub-Saharan Africa to meet urgent needs, promote development and economic growth, reinforce sound policies and good governance and support their efforts towards meeting the Millennium Goals.

In today's globalised world, developments in one continent often have immediate and far-reaching repercussions on life in other continents. Peace, stability and better economic prospects for all people in Africa are therefore in the interest of Americans and Europeans

alike. The long road towards sustainable social, political, and economic development in Africa is a road that Africa should not be left to walk alone.
(end joint declaration)

FACT SHEET U.S.-EU SUMMIT: COMMITMENT OF AFRICA

"We...share a commitment to help the people of Africa build strong democratic institutions and healthy economies...."

President George W. Bush



Juncker, (L) listens to US President George W. Bush during a press conference in the East Room of the White House 20 June in Washington.

June 7, 2005
Washington, DC

U.S.-EU Declaration

The U.S. and EU are committed to joining and accelerating our efforts in support of democratic African nations, while acknowledging African ownership of present and future development on the continent. We stand in partnership with Africans and the international com-

munity to support African efforts to achieve peace, stability, democracy, and prosperity. In working with the AU and its programs such as NEPAD, as well as African regional organizations, we affirm and support their role in resolving conflicts and encouraging democratic transitions, good governance, and sustainable economic development. We continue to develop long-term solutions to Africa's public health issues, poverty, and humanitarian emergencies, such as famine, through aid, debt relief, and development initiatives.

U.S. Initiatives Benefiting Africa

The U.S. supports the call for global attention to Africa, and endeavors to promote long-term growth and poverty reduction while continuing to mitigate and prevent humanitarian crises. The U.S. has tripled its assistance to Africa since 2000, to \$3.2 billion in 2004, and recently announced an additional approximately \$674 million for humanitarian emergencies. We agreed to forgive the debts of many of poorest countries owed to the international financial institutions. The USG is continuing development initiatives that benefit Africa such as the Millennium Challenge Account, the President's Emergency Fund for AIDS Relief, and the African Growth and Opportunity Act.

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦

Africa Moving Forward on Many Fronts, State's Zoellick Says

By Charles W. Corey
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington – Great progress is being made in U.S.-Africa relations, in trade through the opening afforded by the African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) and in the fight against the HIV/AIDS pandemic, but conflicts like that in Sudan continue to fester and “must end now,” says U.S. Deputy Secretary of State Robert B. Zoellick.

Speaking June 2 at the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) plenary in Kigali, Rwanda, Zoellick pointed the way forward in the words of the great African statesman Jomo Kenyatta: “Chembe na chembe gata hue” -- “Little by little, we make progress.”

COMESA is a major factor in the progress through trade facilitation, investment, the Court of Justice, the PTA Bank, the African Trade Union Insurance Agency and the Leather on Leather Projects Institute, Zoellick told his audience. There is a 20 percent growth rate now going on within the COMESA Free Trade Area and the volume of trade has increased fivefold from \$1 billion in 2000 to more than \$5 billion in 2004, he said.

The United States recognizes the importance of regional associations like COMESA, Zoellick said, which help to build cooperation, support development, strengthen security, and advance good governance and democracy, and the United States is pleased it could support COMESA through a \$7 million grant from the United States Agency for International Development

(USAID).

The deputy secretary recalled his days as U.S. Trade Representative when he worked closely with COMESA to help bring about the passage of the historic African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) that has allowed 98 percent of sub-Saharan Africa's products to be imported into the United States duty free, and as such, “real results” have been realized.

“In 2004, AGOA exports to the United States were up 88 percent to \$26.6 billion. COMESA exports under AGOA were up 227 percent to \$2.3 billion, and the non-oil exports of that amount were up 48 percent to \$1 billion.” Despite such progress, he cautioned, AGOA eligible countries and COMESA must diversify both their economies and exports.

AGOA eliminates tariffs in the United States for the import of some 6,400 products, he said. “That means we can import fresh roses, toys and games from Kenya, cereal and beverages from Ethiopia, fruits and nuts from Malawi, footwear from Mauritius, and ... the beautiful flower that grows here in Rwanda.”

Besides diversification, what is also urgently needed across Africa is the integration of both trade and aid, Zoellick told his audience.

U.S. overseas development assistance has “nearly doubled” from 2000 to 2004 to \$19 billion, he said, a growth rate that “is higher than any time since the Marshall Plan for Europe fifty years ago. U. S. development aid to sub-Saharan Africa has risen three to four times over that period, to about \$3 to \$5

billion over the past two years.”

A key part of the U.S. assistance, he said, is the Millennium Challenge Account (MCA), that provides funds to states that institute ‘homegrown’ reforms for good governance, anti-corruption, sound economic policies and investing in people. Of the 17 fully eligible MCA countries, eight are from sub-Saharan Africa, three of which are from COMESA, he explained, and seven of the 13 eligible threshold countries are from sub-Saharan Africa, five from COMESA.

The great challenge, he said, is how to draw all these development strands together, and the United States is the central player in much of this progress.

“If you combine development assistance, private capital flows, grants by NGOs [non-government organizations], and trade, the United States now supplies 70 percent of the G-8 support to developing nations,” he told his audience. “If you take the amount of net private investment, personal remittances to developing countries, and NGO grants, that amount from the United States totaled \$48 billion last year, over two and half times the amount we had in overseas development assistance. That,” he said, “emphasizes the importance of how we connect development aid with other capital flows.”

Trade and aid capital flows also, Zoellick recalled, must be combined with attention to the HIV/AIDS crisis and health. President Bush's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR) - the largest inter-

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Byliner: AGOA Forum Highlights U.S. Commitment to African Prosperity



E. Anthony Wayne

The following article was prepared by Assistant Secretary of State for Economic and Business Affairs E. Anthony Wayne. There are no republication restrictions.

(begin byliner)

AGOA: Promoting Trade and Prosperity in Africa

By E. Anthony Wayne, assistant secretary for economic and business affairs, U.S. Department of State

President Bush and Presidents Mogae, Kufuor, Pohamba, Tandja and Guebuza recently announced that the fourth African Growth and Opportunity Act (AGOA) Forum will take place in Dakar, Senegal July 18 to 20. President Abdoulaye Wade of Senegal has graciously agreed to join the United States in co-hosting the 2005 AGOA Forum.

AGOA is a tangible symbol of the United States' commitment to support actions, in partnership with Africans, that generate growth and lasting development. Secretary Rice plans to be in Dakar and will underscore our continued efforts to promote democracy and prosperity in the region.

By increasing trade, AGOA is creating economic growth and decreasing poverty. Due to AGOA preferences, 98 percent of all

goods from Africa enter the U.S. duty-free. AGOA imports from Sub-Saharan Africa increased 88 percent between 2003 and 2004, to \$26.6 billion. Non-oil imports such as automobiles and agricultural goods were \$3.5 billion, up 22 percent over the same period.

African countries can unleash even more new trade and investment opportunities by reducing tariffs within the region, improving the business climate and accelerating regional cooperation. In creating the New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD), Africa's leaders committed to sound economic management, opening their economies, and boosting investment. They pledged to promote sustainable development, transparency, democratic institutions and a legal and regulatory framework that supports private enterprise and innovation. We can already see tangible results.

African leaders are taking important steps to further accelerate economic growth by driving down the cost and risk of doing business, and creating legal and financial systems that support a stable environment for job creation and a thriving private sector. Madagascar, Benin, Kenya, Mozambique and Namibia, for example, are implementing reforms to encourage private investment. Botswana and South Africa rank in the top 25 percent of 145 countries ranked by a World Bank report, "Doing Business in 2005." According to the International Monetary Fund (IMF), real GDP growth in sub-Saharan Africa increased in 2004 to an eight-year high of 5 percent and average inflation has fallen to

25-year lows.

Our goal is not just to help Sub-Saharan Africa, but also to strengthen Sub-Saharan Africa's participation in the global economy by integrating trade with aid. The United States now supplies 70 percent of G7 financial flows to developing nations. Since 2000, the U.S. has more than tripled Official Development Assistance to Africa to \$3.2 billion in 2004, and, as President Bush has said, we are committed to doing more in the future. The U.S. is the top source of Official Development Assistance and private financial flows (imports, direct investment, remittances) to the developing world.

On June 7, President Bush announced \$674 million of additional resources to respond to humanitarian emergencies in Africa. \$414 million will be spent to avert famine in the Horn of Africa. As the President said, "Helping those who suffer and preventing the senseless death of millions in Africa is a central commitment of my Administration's foreign policy. We're making historic progress in helping the poorest countries in Africa to gain a fresh start and build a future of greater opportunity and prosperity."

Africa is a major beneficiary of the President's \$15 billion five-year Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief. In 2004, African countries received about \$780 million for HIV/AIDS prevention, treatment and care, tripling the number of Africans receiving life-saving anti-retroviral treatment. In FY 2005, USG assistance will grow to nearly

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Africa Panel Finds Ethiopia's Elections . . .

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But after clashes between government forces and demonstrators resulted in 35 deaths from June 6 to June 9, Gaffney said, "We have publicly and consistently condemned it. And condemned the excessive use of force on the part of the government. Secretary [of State Condoleezza] Rice herself called Prime Minister Meles to express our concern about this. And we continue to do this and to talk to the opposition as well."

Referring to the signing of the Joint Declaration by the Ethiopian People's Revolutionary Democratic Party (EPRDF), Coalition for Unity and Democracy (CUD) and the United Ethiopian Democratic Forces (UEDF) on June 10, Gaffney stated: "We are pleased with steps that have been taken, including this joint pact against further violence."

"We realize this really is a turning point in Ethiopia's history," Gaffney told the panel. "This means the ruling party and opposition parties are going to be partners in whatever government finally emerges. And it's really incumbent on both sides to reach out to each other because this is the only

way their government and country will be able to move forward."

Professor Lyons, who observed a number of Ethiopian elections over the years, told the panel, "There was a very open campaign process that took place in the lead-up to the elections. And I can state that the opposition was [fully] engaged" in a process which they had largely boycotted in previous elections.

The result was "a huge, massive turnout of voters" for the May 15 balloting. For the first time, "a vast number of Ethiopians had a choice" in an electoral process that was both "exciting and promising," he added.

Noting the surprise vote against government candidates in what observers thought were safe rural areas, which led to a number of top officials losing seats in Parliament, Lyons predicted "a seismic shift in Ethiopian politics. Ethiopia is going to be a different place," more open politically, he said.

Human Rights Watch's Albin-Lackey was also positive in his assessment: "I agree the elections were an incredible achievement"

for Ethiopia. However, he said he was disturbed at the number of opposition members who had been arrested and detained since the elections. "I know people in Addis Ababa who have disappeared in the last week," he said.

But he acknowledged the opposition had been provoking the government. "CUD's rhetoric has been inflammatory over the past few weeks," he stated.

The former Peace Corps volunteer also said he was concerned the Meles government had put down demonstrations "by an excessive amount of force." At the same time, he commended the judicial system. One hears over and over again about judges releasing people from detention and most Ethiopians believe the courts are "a bright spot" in an otherwise politically oppressive system, he said, recommending donors should provide more aid for the judiciary.

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦

Byliner: AGOA Forum Highlights U.S. Commitment . . .

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\$1.1 billion to fight HIV/AIDS. The United States is also devoting funding to other serious health dangers -- including polio, tuberculosis, and malaria.

The United States has joined together with her G7 partners to for-

give \$40 billion in multi-lateral debt of 18 Heavily Indebted Poor Countries (HIPC); 14 of those countries are in Africa. This will free up government funds for investment in education, health and private sector development. An additional 18 African countries are under consideration for additional debt

forgiveness. The U.S. routinely forgives 100 percent of bilateral debt of countries that qualify under the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Initiative (HIPC).

The Millennium Challenge Account (MCA) is yet another way

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Refugees Build New Lives in the United States

By Charlene Porter
Washington File Staff Writer



Arthur E. "Gene"

Washington – Coming from Somalia, Liberia, Burma, Laos, Bosnia, Belarus, Ecuador and dozens of other countries, almost 53,000 refugees resettled in the United

States in 2004 fleeing violence, conflict or the threat of persecution at home in hopes of a better life in the United States.

"Refugees are special people; they are survivors," said Assistant Secretary of State Arthur E. "Gene" Dewey, who oversees the Bureau of Population, Refugees and Migration (PRM), an agency that sends its workers into the refugee camps of the world to help identify people for resettlement to the United States. "If given a chance, they will thrive. Utica [New York] and Erie [Pennsylvania] and communities across the United States have given them the chance, and they know it pays off."

PRM works with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to bring refugees to the United States, which offers resettlement to more refugees than any other nation. Since 1975, the United States has become the new homeland for more than 2.5 million refugees from all over the world, according to PRM statistics.

"These are families who – the Erie community recognizes – come

and stay and contribute," said Michael Murnock who helps resettle refugees in Erie. "Then, of course, new generations come along; that's very important to the community."

Murnock is with the International Institute of Erie, a nongovernmental organization (NGO) that has been helping refugees build new lives since World War I brought displaced Europeans to the northwestern Pennsylvania city on the Great Lakes.

Erie is a city of almost 104,000, but its population has been declining in recent decades, as heavy industries like steel and oil have weakened in the northeastern region of the United States. The refugees who have come to the city – about 200 in 2004, an anticipated 250 in 2005, Murnock said – help revitalize neighborhoods.

"They have their own apartments, they pay taxes, they improve the conditions of the apartments that they live in," Murnock said. "Then they go on to buy homes."

Utica is another northeastern city where industrial decline through the last decades of the 20th century caused population loss and economic hardship.

"The town had been hemorrhaging for years," Utica Mayor Tim Julian told UNHCR's Refugee magazine in an April article. "The arrival of so many refugees has put a tourniquet around that hemorrhaging. They have saved entire neighborhoods which were ready for the wrecking ball."

The Mohawk Valley Resource Center for Refugees (MVRRCR) is one of the organizations that help resettle people in Utica. They meet refugees at the airport, bring them to new homes, show them how to operate the appliances, teach them English, direct them toward employment and perform any number of services necessary to help a person adjust to a new city and nation.

"We help these people fill out the application for public assistance," said Dzevad Racic, director of resettlement for MVRRCR. "We assist them to gain a social security number, also we refer them to the local health department so they get a [medical] screening."

Racic has experience with the routine. He came to Utica as a refugee in 1996 leaving his war-torn homeland of Bosnia-Herzegovina, a past that he politely refuses to discuss. He is one of an estimated 5,000 Bosnians who have found their way to Utica, a city with hard winters much like those of their former homeland.

"I feel like I was born here," Racic said of his new hometown. "People are very comfortable here."

Having lived as a refugee is an advantage in helping others, Racic said, but adds that some refugees have a more difficult adjustment than others. Recent years have brought more Africans to Utica. Those who come from underdeveloped countries – such as the Somali Bantus, for instance – need

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Refugees Build New Lives in the . . .

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training in basic functional skills: how to use household fixtures such as doorknobs, sinks and bathrooms.

With those challenges facing the Africans, the "adjustment period can be extended for a little bit longer time," Racic said. "I also see the good result after a year and a half, two years, they are working, they come over here with a nice car.

In Erie, Murnock said refugees make a rapid adjustment. "All the folks become economically self-sufficient – paying their own family bills with their own earned income – within four to six months."

Erie businesses are acquainted with the long-term work of the International Institute of Erie and the capabilities of refugees, Murnock said. Employers contact the institute with job availabilities, and job counselors are able to place newly resettled refugees in positions.

"Many of the refugee folks are in assembly-line positions in manufacturing, and there are some other positions in retail that our employment people locate," Murnock said. A few of the Erie newcomers start their own businesses – restaurants, gift shops and grocery stores, creating further employment and commerce in the city.

Almost 53,000 refugees came to the United States in 2004 and started making lives in places like Erie and Utica. In 2005, Dewey said he hopes more will make this same journey, perhaps 55,000. Dewey said that other U.S. communities involved in resettlement

efforts report similarly positive experiences. PRM works with 10 nongovernmental organizations in the reception and placement of refugees, evaluating the communities that welcome them and their capability to provide the support and counseling that refugees will need to build lives for themselves in a new land.

"There's strong domestic support for the U.S. admission program among the NGOs, who see this as part of a humanitarian mission," Dewey said.

The president makes a decision each year on the number of refugees the United States will be able to accept for resettlement. In 2005, that number is 70,000, but Dewey said it will be at least 2006 before PRM is able to muster the funding and the capacity to select, approve, train and resettle so many people, given the additional complexity that has entered the process in recent years.

The September 2001 terrorist attacks upon the United States demanded that PRM, working with the Department of Homeland Security, develop a more thorough and rigorous process for interviewing and screening possible resettlement candidates in order to protect U.S. national security. That process has been difficult, Dewey said, and the additional requirements have increased initial settlement costs from about \$2,200 per refugee in 2001 to about \$3,500 per person in 2004 – about a 60 percent increase.

Dewey is optimistic about gradual increases in what he calls the "rescue operation" of refugee admissions, but he also acknowl-

edges that it's impossible for the United States to meet the needs of hundreds of thousands – perhaps millions – of refugees for whom repatriation will never be possible.

U.S. admissions of refugees exceed the sum total of all the other nations, according to PRM figures. Dewey calls on these other nations to step up their efforts to open their doors to refugees.

The United States, Canada, Australia, Sweden, Norway, Finland, New Zealand, Denmark and the Netherlands accept the majority of refugees resettled each year. Ireland, Iceland, Spain and the United Kingdom have developed programs over the last few years. The U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees also describes Argentina, Brazil and Chile as emerging resettlement countries.

Further details (<http://www.state.gov/g/prm/refadm/>) about PRM's resettlement activities are available on the State Department's Web site.

Additional information (<http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/protect?id=3b8366bc4>) on the international resettlement activities is available on the UNHCR Web site.

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦

Officials Defend Bush Proposal to Buy Some Foreign Food for Aid

By Bruce Odessey
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington -- Administration officials defended President Bush's proposal to spend up to \$300 million in fiscal year 2006 to buy foreign food rather than U.S. food for emergency aid.

In June 16 testimony before a House of Representatives Agriculture subcommittee, William Garvelink, acting assistant administrator at the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), said using cash in some international emergencies would save lives "when speed counts."

Getting food into central Sudan, for example, takes a very long time, he said. If USAID had cash to spend at the beginning of the Darfur crisis, he said, the agency could have purchased surplus grain from other parts of Sudan for delivery to Darfur in less than one-third the time it would take to ship from the United States. The quicker delivery could have saved perhaps 50,000 lives.

Representative Bob Goodlatte, Republican chairman of the House

Agriculture Committee, said he remained strongly opposed to the proposal, which would subtract \$300 million from the Food for Peace Program, established by Public Law 480, July 10, 1954, that purchases U.S. food for food aid.



"Our mandate is to try to save lives overseas," Garvelink said.

Garvelink called \$300 million a small proportion of total U.S. food aid and said that any emergency spending would buy commodities from poor countries near the emergency site, not from major exporters such as the European Union, Australia and Brazil.

On a related issue, subcommittee members pressed Bush administration officials to resist proposals in

World Trade Organization (WTO) negotiations that would require donor countries to make all food aid in the form of cash, not commodities.

"What the world needs is more food aid commodities, more cash and more donors -- not new, impractical rules that require everyone to contribute in exactly the same way," testified W. Kirk Miller, the U.S. Department of Agriculture general sales manager for foreign food aid.

The July 2004 framework agreement for WTO agriculture negotiations requires that any final agreement has new disciplines on food aid. The United States takes the position that existing rules are adequate. Miller said that international food experts must be involved in negotiating those disciplines.

"The real challenge will be agreeing on disciplines that encourage donors to meet vital humanitarian and development needs while assuring no commercial market displacement," he said. ♦

Rice, Jolie Mark World Refugee Day in Washington Ceremony

By Charlene Porter
Washington File Staff Writer

Washington — A global call for the safety and protection of 17 million refugees arose from Washington June 15, echoing with tribute to the courage of people who flee war, violence or discrimination in search of safety and hope for a better future.

The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) opened a five-day recognition of June 20's World Refugee Day with a ceremony in the U.S. capital, bringing both diplomatic and cinematic star power to the event.

U.S. Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice and film star Angelina Jolie shared the stage during a ceremony hosted by the National Geographic Society. Rice came to the event as chief diplomat for a nation that offers resettlement to more refugees each year than any other — 53,000 in 2004, and a projected 55,000 in 2005. Jolie serves as goodwill ambassador for UNHCR and, in that role, has traveled to remote areas in more than 15 nations, meeting and encouraging refugees and the people who assist them.

Rice said the United States has a "deep and abiding" commitment to the protection and assistance of refugees. "Communities across our

country have opened their doors and their hearts to refugees helping them to begin new lives in safety and in freedom," she said.

The United States provided almost \$700 million for overseas assistance to refugees and conflict victims in 2004. It provided additional hundreds of millions of dol-

Jolie, who has represented the cause of refugees for almost four years, noted the more than 50,000 refugees resettled in the United States in 2004. "I'm certain among these 50,000, you'll also find some of the best and brightest of America's future," she said.

While acknowledging those success stories, Jolie

also said: "There are 17 million whose futures are still uncertain. Refugee Day is the day we make sure they aren't forgotten."

In front of a crowd of almost 400 refugee activists and supporters, a movie star and a diplomat were not the most riveting figures on the National Geographic stage. The crowd offered its longest and loudest ovations to Paul Rusesabagina, the hotel manager who provided protection for more than 1,000 refugees during Rwanda's genocide in 1994. His story was the subject of the acclaimed 2004

film Hotel Rwanda.

As the crowd offered its tribute to Rusesabagina, so did the secretary of state. "Paul, you have shown us what true courage is in the face of evil," said Rice, speaking directly to Rusesabagina, who sat just steps from her across the



Secretary Rice with UN High Commissioner for Refugees Goodwill Ambassador Angelina Jolie launch World Refugee Day at the National Geographic Society

lars in global food aid, much of which flowed to refugees and displaced persons.

In recognition of World Refugee Day, Rice said, the United States renews its pledge "to keep the hope of the world's refugees alive."

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Conflict Management Major Security Challenge, State's Pascal Says



**Ambassador
Carlos Pascual**

A leading authority on the long-term consequences of conflict says one of the greatest national security challenges today is preventing and managing conflict

while recognizing that ad hoc responses are insufficient.

Ambassador Carlos Pascual, coordinator of a new State Department Office for Reconstruction and Stabilization, told members of Congress June 16 that conflict management "requires a paradigm shift in how we think about international relations."

He told the Senate Foreign Relations Committee that the greatest risk and challenge occur when nations emerge from a conflict or civil strife. When legitimate government is absent, Pascual said, voids are filled by terrorism, organized crime, weapons proliferation, human trafficking and other threats to national security.

The scope of full-spectrum conflict management is so broad that no single U.S. government office is sufficiently equipped to handle it — which, he said, is why a joint effort must be coordinated across the U.S. government. Pascual's task is to create an interagency capability for joint operations to prevent or prepare for conflict, including the ability to facilitate peace negotiations, peacekeeping, economic or humanitarian assistance, support for the rule of law, civilian police functions, and coordination with military authorities.

"Sustainable peace requires more than stabilization," the ambassador said. "It requires the removal of 'the ills that led to conflict in the first place.'" Such complicated tasks require, first, an understanding of how to prevent conflict, Pascual said, and, if prevention is not possible, experts must be prepared to respond more effectively to post-conflict management.

If government-wide resources can be better coordinated and the capabilities of international, private-sector and non government organizations leveraged more effectively, Pascual said, "we stand a better

chance of affecting the dynamics on the ground."

The coordinator said early-warning capabilities are improving and early warning is being linked to early response. The Bush administration's fiscal year 2006 budget request of \$124 million would support an Active Response Corps (and a Standby Corps) that will be ready to deploy to a region in crisis.

Pascual said such skills and resources are needed immediately in places such as Sudan.

He also said work has begun to prevent conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and plans are under way to develop a framework for U.S. strategy in the immediate aftermath of the eventual death of Cuban President Fidel Castro.

(Distributed by the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦

Health Promoters Bring Care to Remote and Poor Communities

HOSSANA, Ethiopia—Masame Makebo teaches other mothers in villages about five miles away from this southern city how to keep their children healthy. Makebo is one of 4,200 community health promoters trained through Essential Services for Health in Ethiopia (ESHE), an \$18 million, five-year project operating in three regions. The health promoters are community-selected volunteers who work with health professionals to encourage basic healthcare and immunization. By the end of 2005, ESHE will have trained another 15,000 health promoters.

Ethiopia is one of six nations that account for 50 percent of under-5 child deaths worldwide. Every year, more than 450,000 children die from preventable diseases here. So Makebo's simple advice on immunizations, breastfeeding, and nutrition can be lifesaving. Anyone who comes to see her also learns about

the importance of washing hands before touching food and about using latrines.

The current stage of ESHE, which began in November 2003, works simultaneously at local and federal levels, with a focus on strengthen-



Volunteer health promoters Bonse Hussein and Sitina Bedhaos travel to different villages in southern Ethiopia, speaking about the dangers of traditional practices that are harmful to girls. USAID supports various projects working with health volunteers throughout the country.

ing routine health services—an effort that is part of USAID/

Ethiopia's famine prevention strategy.

Results in the southern region of Ethiopia are already visible. The level of child immunizations increased from 54 percent in 2003 to 74 percent in 2004. Pit latrine coverage has increased, as has the use of contraception. ESHE developed training modules for its health promoters based on findings from a household survey conducted in 2003–04. Now health promoters like Makebo are at the frontlines of healthcare, speaking at community health festivals and workshops.

Health promotion through ESHE is also being done over the radio. A four-day workshop with radio stations, local NGOs, and government officials last year developed radio spots on children's immunizations. Six spots have aired since, and more are being produced.

(Taken from Front Lines (June 2005) a USAID publication.) ♦

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the United States partners with Africans to encourage homegrown reforms for good governance, anti-corruption, sound economic policies and investing in people. Thus far, our Congress has approved roughly \$2.5 billion in MCA funding, and President Bush has requested more funding for 2006. MCA is based on the concept that foreign assistance yields

better results in countries that adopt market-oriented economic policies, promote good governance, and offer a stable investment climate. Of the seventeen countries now eligible to apply for MCA funding, eight are African. In April of this year, Madagascar became the very first country to sign a Millennium Challenge Compact.

We are also drawing on Africa's

strong tradition of entrepreneurship to help build prosperity. USAID has forged partnerships with European as well as American companies to help create jobs and raise incomes in Africa, and to increase African exports. The Cisco Networking Alliance, for example, has partnered with 25 African countries to establish information technology (IT)

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United States Tentatively Approves Generic Antiretroviral AIDS Drug

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has tentatively approved applications from two companies in India for nevirapine, an antiretroviral drug used with other antiretroviral agents to treat HIV-1 infection.

According to a June 20 FDA press release, the tablets are the first generic versions of viramune tablets manufactured by Boehringer Ingelheim. FDA approval makes the generic tablets available for consideration for purchase under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR), the Bush administration's five-year, \$15 billion initiative to turn the tide in combating the global HIV/AIDS pandemic. The emergency plan, announced in 2003, is providing funds to fight the pandemic, with a special focus on 15 hardest-hit countries.

Approval of nevirapine is called tentative because, although the products meet all FDA quality, safety and efficacy standards required for marketing in the United States, patents or exclusivity prevent the two generic drugs from being marketed in the United States.

The PEPFAR plan is designed to prevent 7 million new HIV infections, treat at least 2 million HIV-infected people and care for 10 million HIV-affected individuals, AIDS orphans and vulnerable children.

Text of the FDA press release follows:

U.S. Food and Drug Administration Press release, June 20, 2005

FDA Tentatively Approves First

Generic Nevirapine under the President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) today announced the tentative approval of two applications for nevirapine tablets manufactured by Ranbaxy Laboratories Limited, Guragon, India and Aurobindo Pharma Limited, Hyderabad, India.



Some believe the new drug may benefit all HIV patients

dent's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief (PEPFAR).

"America is leading the global fight against HIV/AIDs and the scientists of our department are at the forefront of that effort," said Health and Human Services Secretary Mike Leavitt. "The FDA, as well as others in our department and the administration, has been working diligently to make safe and effective treatments available at lower costs as quickly as possible to combat this worldwide problem. Working together, we're helping reduce the pain and suffering of HIV/AIDS throughout the world."

The Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, which President Bush first announced in his 2003 State of the Union Address, is currently providing \$15 billion to fight the HIV/

AIDS pandemic over five years,



with a special focus on 15 of the hardest hit countries.

The PEPFAR plan is designed to prevent seven million new HIV infections, treat at least two million HIV-infected people, and care for ten million HIV-affected individuals, AIDS orphans and vulnerable children. It targets three specific areas related to HIV/AIDS:

Prevention of HIV transmission. Treatment of AIDS and associated conditions. Care, including palliative care for HIV infected individuals, and care for orphans and vulnerable children. Nevirapine is in the class of drugs called non-nucleoside reverse transcriptase inhibitors (NNRTIs), which helps keep the AIDS virus from reproducing. This antiretroviral drug is used in combination with other antiretroviral agents for the treatment of HIV-1 infection.

The Agency's tentative approval means that although existing patents and/or exclusivity prevent the marketing of Aurobindo's and Ranbaxy's products in the United States, these products meet all of FDA's quality, safety and efficacy standards required for marketing in the United States. As such, they are now eligible to be considered for purchase and use outside the United States.

More information on HIV and AIDS is available online at FDA's website: <http://www.fda.gov/oashi/aids/hiv.html> ♦

USAID Funds Anti-Malaria Expedition to Seven African Countries

Washington -- The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) announced June 16 its support of South African explorer Kingsley Holgate's "African Rainbow Expedition" to prevent malaria. Holgate -- one of Africa's most colorful modern-day explorers -- will travel thousands of miles in the next year distributing insecticide-treated mosquito nets, anti-malaria products and information leaflets on preventing malaria infection for mothers, babies and families in rural villages in seven countries throughout Africa.

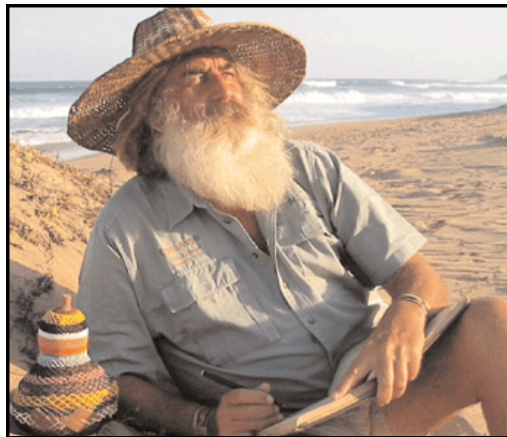
By means of a large shipping vessel, together with sponsored Land Rovers and inflatable boats, the malaria-prevention products will reach remote riverside and lakeshore village residents of Mozambique, Tanzania and Kenya. The expedition, according to a USAID press release, will also utilize Land Rovers to be used as mobile malaria-prevention clinics.

In addition, the expedition will distribute mosquito nets in high-risk malaria areas in Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda. The expedition began in South Africa on June 10, and continues through Mozambique, Zambia, Malawi, Tanzania, Kenya and Uganda, ending in July 2006.

In recent years, USAID has more than quadrupled funding for malaria activities and programs, from \$22 million in fiscal year 1998 to roughly \$90 million in fiscal year 2005. Supporting Holgate's travels throughout high-risk malaria areas in Mozambique, the USAID release said, is a creative way for USAID to reach vulnerable populations in remote areas -- tackling a

challenge in malaria prevention and education as part of USAID's overall malaria strategy.

"We are very excited for USAID to have this opportunity to join forces with the Holgate team, who share our passion to save as many lives as possible from malaria," said Dr. Kent Hill, USAID's acting assistant administrator of the Bureau for Global Health. "The thou-



Kingsley Holgate, Legendary modern day explorer

sands of families he will meet will not only learn how to prevent and treat malaria, but will also be provided bed nets so children and mothers will not get sick or die from this terrible disease. This is truly the front lines of public health, and USAID is taking quick action."

Worldwide, an estimated 300 million to 500 million cases of malaria occur every year, according to USAID, resulting in up to 2.5 million deaths, mostly among young children. Malaria itself is the Number 1 killer of children in Africa, causing the deaths of at least 1 million infants and children under 5 every year. However, death from malaria is largely preventable if ad-

dressed in time and with basic interventions.

Bed nets treated with an appropriate insecticide have been proven effective in killing mosquitoes, according to USAID. The netting also acts as an additional protective barrier. Consistently sleeping under an insecticide-treated bed net, the USAID release said, has been shown to decrease severe malaria by 45 percent, reduce premature births by 42 percent and cut total child mortality by 17 percent to 63 percent.

For those at risk in malaria-endemic Africa (south of the Sahel and north of the Zambezi River), insecticide-treated bed nets are a practical and effective means of protecting the population. These nets, according to USAID, provide "significant protection" to those sleeping under them and can reduce deaths in children by one-fifth and episodes of malaria by half.

Holgate and his team have already completed several malaria research expeditions in remote villages in Africa. A fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, Holgate has immersed himself in African cultures and has spent much of his life exploring the African continent in the footsteps of the early explorers.

Holgate's adventures, many of which are world firsts, include Cape to Cairo in 1993, a journey in the footsteps of Livingstone and Stanley, and a circumnavigation of Kenya's Lake Turkana -- the world's largest desert lake. ♦

Emergency Polio Immunization Campaign Under Way in Somalia

Tens of thousands of volunteers, health workers and community leaders are going from household to household in Somalia starting June 17 to hand deliver polio vaccine to every child under age 5.

The World Health Organization (WHO) announced June 17 that the emergency campaign is being undertaken in Somalia because 230 children have become paralyzed by polio in nearby Ethiopia and Yemen. These two nations are among 16 previously polio-free countries that have been re-

infected with the crippling viral disease as a result of an outbreak that has rippled across West and Central Africa.



A press release from WHO described this campaign as an emergency preventive measure to rapidly boost immunity among Somali children. It is estimated that only one-quarter of Somali children are regularly vaccinated.

The vaccination campaign is backed by the Global Polio Eradica-

tion Initiative, a partnership spearheaded by WHO, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the service organization Rotary International. The occurrence of polio has declined 99 percent since the eradication initiative began its work in 1988.

Poliovirus has reappeared in Benin, Botswana, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Ethiopia, Ghana, Guinea, Indonesia, Mali, Saudi Arabia, Sudan, Togo and Yemen. ♦

Rice, Jolie Mark World Refugee Day in Washington . . .

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stage. "When Rwanda sank into genocide, you, a hotel manager, found the courage to shelter over 1,200 refugees from certain death, putting your own life in great jeopardy. This story should give us all the courage to rise to the moral challenges that come our way."

UNHCR presented Rusesabagina with the World Refugee Day Humanitarian Award, jointly presented to Terry George, the director-producer of *Hotel Rwanda*.

Despite this admiration, Rusesabagina was humble about his role, calling himself not a hero but a husband and father who tried to do the right thing at a time when he was "absolutely certain" that he would not survive the 100 days of violence.

"The streets swam with blood. People [were] in despair, they had no food, no shelter. They were terrified, fearing for their lives, and the lives of their loved ones. The fortunate ones became refugees, because others were killed," Rusesabagina said.

Rusesabagina was one of the fortunate ones, who became a refugee in Belgium, a fate that was also cruel, he said, because "all your plans, goals and objectives vanished."

With those memories, Rusesabagina echoed Jolie in calling World Refugee Day a time to remember all those who suffer this plight whether in Sudan, Burundi, Somalia, or hundreds of other places.

"We need to give our fellow men and women hope. We need to reach out to them now so that we do not see a Hotel Darfur 10 years from now," Rusesabagina said.

The official Web page for World Refugee Day (<http://www.unhcr.ch/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/events?id=3e7f46e04>) is posted on the UNHCR Web site.

An overview of U.S. refugee programs is available from the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration (<http://www.state.gov/g/prm/>).

(The Washington File is a product of the Bureau of International Information Programs, U.S. Department of State. Web site: <http://usinfo.state.gov>) ♦

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training academies at 75 institutions throughout the continent. According to tracking data from those academies, 77 percent of their graduates have found jobs in a field that can help accelerate the growth of the IT industry in Africa and provide a critical tool for economic development.

The Cisco Alliance is one of the many achievements of USAID's Leland Initiative, which established the principal Internet gateway for 10 African countries and provided 2 million Africans with Internet access. The Last Mile Initiative, launched in 2004, is extending existing Internet coverage to the rural poor. The Digital Freedom Initiative has placed volunteers in businesses and community centers to provide small businesses and entrepreneurs with computer skills and knowledge. These efforts have helped to create an environment that supports private investment, provides fair and

stable regulation, and has led to Africa becoming the world's fastest growing mobile market over the past five years.

As Deputy Secretary of State Zoellick said in his remarks at the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) Plenary in Rwanda, the United States stands with Africa as a partner and as a friend because we want African nations to be a vital part of the global economy and we want the African people to have security, opportunity and hope. While many challenges remain, we are confident that great strides will be made because Africans themselves are leading the way.

(end byliner)

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Africa Moving Forward on Many Fronts,

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national health project in history – is projected to provide \$15 billion over five years to combat the global pandemic, he said. Last year, the United States allocated \$2.3 billion to that program, he said, while noting that there are other serious health dangers lurking like malaria – to which the United States devotes some \$230 million a year.

Ultimately, he said, to be successful in these economic, financial, political and health efforts, both donor nations like the United States and aid recipients must listen and learn from each other.

Zoellick also noted that there are many other factors that threaten Africa's economic growth and de-

velopment: internal civil strife, war, crimes against domestic populations, including genocide, as other factors, citing Sudan specifically as a place of tragedy and sadness.

"There is a massive need for humanitarian aid, but also for security in creating the basis for peaceful reconciliation," he said, echoing African Union Chairman Alpha Oumar Konare's warning that if Sudan struggles and collapses in strife, it could take its nine neighbors and much of Africa with it.

Zoellick also thanked the African Union for its valuable contributions to the mission in Sudan and its agreement to further expand the peacekeeping efforts there.

The transcript (<http://www.state.gov/s/d/rm/47886.htm>) of Deputy Secretary Zoellick's remarks is available on the State Department's Web site. For additional information, see African Growth and Opportunity Act (http://usinfo.state.gov/af/africa/trade_economic_development/agoa.html).

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